

## Certification Corner

# Certification Council Steps Down

by George P. Kousaleos  
*Former National Certification Council Chair*

### New Board Appointed

The National Certification Council has completed its official responsibilities of developing the Certification Examination and creating an organizational structure that will continue the work of National Certification. It has overseen the development and first administration of the National Certification Examination in June, 1992. The Council accomplished all of its goals, including completion of the Job Analysis Survey, organization of Item Writing and Item Review Workshops for the development of the item (question) bank, setting a passing score, approving the final examination form and, finally, completing the bylaws that allow the National Certification Board to operate with administrative independence as an Independent Affiliate of the AMTA.

The National Certification Council's Nominations Committee has recommended the appointment of eight professional members to the first National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB). A public (consumer) member will be named later this fall. NCTMB members include Margaret Avery of Arizona, Director of the Desert Institute; Emily Cowall of Toronto, Canada, Chair of the Ontario Board of Massage Therapy; Leslie Korn of Massachusetts, Director of the Center for Traditional Medicine; Joanne McLees of North Carolina, nurse and massage therapist; Thomas Myers of Maine, Rolf Institute faculty member; Susan Rosen of Washington, educator and Vice Chair of the National Certification Council; Dorothy Schwartzberg of California, Chair of

the Certification Examination Committee; and Steven Schenkman of New York, National President of AOBTA.

The terms of office of the first board will be staggered as two and three year positions to avoid a complete turnover of board members in 1994. Future terms will be two years in duration, with half the board elected by those who have already been nationally certified and half selected with recommendations from the Nominations Committee. The new Board will hold its first meeting in San Antonio, Texas in December, 1992. Following an orientation workshop, the Board will begin its work on committee assignments, recertification guidelines, grievance and appeals procedures and the formation of an Advisory Council.

### Regulation and Insurance News

Since the administration of the first National Certification Examination last June, seven state regulatory boards have contacted the National Certification Program. Five states (Delaware, Florida, Nebraska, New Mexico and Rhode Island) have authorized the use of the examination as the written portion of their licensing examination. Connecticut and Iowa have expressed interest and are likely to adopt the examination as well. One of the stated benefits of National Certification is the acceptance of a national standard that will alleviate some of the difficulties experienced by massage therapists when moving from one licensed state to another. The acceptance of an examination that promotes reciprocity and/or endorsement will

be welcome news to the ever-mobile massage therapy professional.

Recently, the Insurance Commission of West Virginia approved those who are nationally certified in therapeutic massage and bodywork as third party providers. I believe this heralds the beginning of recognition of the validity of the National Certification credential by other state and private agencies.

### A Final Thank You

It has been a great honor to serve for two and a half years as the Chair of the Certification Council. During that time, I travelled throughout the country to participate in conventions, meetings and forums to discuss the merits of National Certification. Whether greeted with support or criticism, I found that massage therapists are deeply concerned about their chosen profession and its future. To all of the practitioners that I have met, spoken with by telephone or corresponded with by mail, I would like to say, "Thank you for your concern, your judgement, your patience and your persistence."

To the members of the Certification Council — Margaret Avery, Patricia Benjamin, Raymond Castellino, Elliot Greene, Jeffrey Maitland, Eva Marie Peterson, Susan Rosen, and Steven Schenkman and former member Susanne Carlson — thank you for your diligence, your professional commitment and the valuable time and energy that you have given so freely since February of 1990. Special thanks also go to the committee chairs and



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their members, who served with vigor and commitment on projects large and small. Administratively speaking, the work could not have been accomplished without the untiring efforts of Sharon Brown, Patricia Benjamin, Susan Rosen, Dorothy Schwartzberg, the professional consultants from Knapp and Associates, the Psychological Corporation, and, especially, the staff at the AMTA Office.

Now I understand how it feels to accomplish a major national goal, born from a shared vision, encompassing a broad and diverse population and establishing our core body of knowledge and skills. It is deeply gratifying to know that each of us who have contributed time, energy, knowledge and passion to this project can be certain this work will not end. Indeed, it will continue to expand and grow with the profession. National Certification will be fueled by the unceasing desire for excellence and the pursuit of truth.

Finally, I wish to thank the membership and leadership of the AMTA. Elliot Greene and the National Board provided an unwavering support which was fortified by your desire to empower our profession. ♦

## Preparing for the National Certification Exam:

# Buyer Be Aware and Beware!

by Patricia J. Benjamin, Ph.D., Director of Education

Books, workshops and videos are starting to appear which offer to help you prepare for the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. Such study aids are common, and may be helpful for reviewing for professional and vocational examinations such as the National Certification Examination. However, materials do vary in quality and relevance to the actual examination, and some teachers are better and more qualified than others. Be a smart consumer, and consider the following cautions before investing in any examination preparation programs or materials.

### Be aware that:

- a review or preparation workshop is a poor substitute for a full class or course of study. Most are intended only to refresh your memory, not to teach you an entire subject from start to finish. Beware of those workshops which promise too much too quickly.
- you have a right to know your teacher's qualifications. Beware of "instant experts" who don't possess an adequate background in the subject they are teaching.
- examinations are made up of randomly selected questions in certain subject areas. These questions change regularly with new versions of the exam and no one knows the actual questions on the particular version of the exam you will take. Beware of any persons or materials which imply that they "know what's on the exam." You can "know" as much as they do by reading the content outline provided in the candidate handbook.
- neither the AMTA nor the National Certification Board publish or endorse any workshops or study materials at this time. Beware of any suggestion that workshops or written materials are approved or published by AMTA or the National Certification Board. There will be a study workbook available from the National Certification Board in about a year.

Review workshops and study materials can be helpful in preparing for the National Certification Exam if chosen carefully. Be a smart consumer. And good luck on your exam! ♦

## Bumper Stumper winners announced.

Carol Spangard of Crystal Lake, Illinois and Margaret Avery of Tucson, Arizona are co-winners of AMTA's Bumper Stumper Contest. Both women suggested *Masssge Therapists Knead You*, while Margaret, who submitted multiple entries, was a double winner. Her *Massage Therapy: What they didn't teach you at Harvard Business School* was the other victorious slogan. Bumper stickers can be purchased through the Membership Department (708) 864-0123. Cost is \$2.95 each, or two for \$5.00. Get yours today and be a driving force behind your association!

Massage Therapy: What they didn't teach you at Harvard Business School

Massage Therapists Knead You